

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Videoconference Host

Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education
550 W. 7th Ave., Suite 1220
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Meeting Date
June 11, 2026
12:35 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Caitlin Poindexter – Co-Chair, Art Delaune – Co-Chair, Representative Andi Story, Carl (CB) Brady, Lisa McDonald, Sabrina Richmond, Corey Gilmore

Council Members and Guests: Judy Edwards, Kaleigh Holm, Demii Van Dusen, Erinn Barnett

GCDSE Staff: Jamie Klimczak, Chelsea Burke, Samantha Vetter

Minutes Prepared by: Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 12:35 p.m.
ROLL CALL – Quorum established

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Caitlin Poindexter welcomed attendees to the meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No conflicts of interest were declared.

APPROVE AGENDA

Art Delaune **MOVED** to approve the meeting agenda as presented, **SECONDED** by Sabrina Richmond. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.

APPROVE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Corey Gilmore **MOVED** to approve the April 9, 2026 meeting minutes as presented, **SECONDED** by Lisa McDonald. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.

REPORTS

Co-Chair Report

No news to report.

Staff Report

Chelsea Burke reported that a Council update was sent to members last week. She encouraged Council members to review it and provide feedback on the engagement. She noted that the fall Council meeting is scheduled for October 5 – 6, 2026, and the winter Council meeting/Juneau fly-in is scheduled for February 8 – 11, 2027. Chelsea reported that Council staff is working towards the August 15th, 2026 deadline for submission of the five-year state plan.

Jamie Klimczak shared that the Council plans to have a resource table at the LINKS Resource Fair on June 18, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Wonderland Park in Wasilla.

BUSINESS

Committee Work, Objective 2, FY 27 Work Plan

Chelsea Burke reported that the Council held a work plan training in May, during which the key activities, outputs, outcomes, and data evaluations were completed. She noted that many of the activities were drawn from prior plans and tailored to fit the new goal and objective areas. Chelsea led the committee through a review of Objective 2 and its activities, outcomes, outputs, and data-evaluation language. The following is a summary of the review and any feedback:

Objective 2: Systems Coordination and Policy Change

By 2031, the Council will advance advocacy and systems-change efforts that improve coordination, alignment, and accountability across state and local systems impacting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including education, health, employment, Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS), and long-term supports and services (LTSS).

Activity 2.1, Shared Vision Systems Coordination

- Facilitate cross-system coordination among self-advocates, advocates, legislators, and agencies to elevate lived experience in policy discussions and support implementation of Alaska's Shared Vision, including participation in and coordination with the Shared Vision Collaborative and discussions impacting Medicaid HCBS waiver services and LTSS.
 - Key activity: Participation in at least six cross-system planning or policy meetings/discussions annually.
 - Output: Increased coordination and shared understanding among stakeholders regarding barriers, priorities, and systems change opportunities impacting people with I/DD.
 - Data evaluation: Meeting agendas/minutes, attendance records, number of self-advocates participating, policy recommendations developed, follow-up actions identified.
 - Comments:
 - Examples of cross-systems work include participation in Shared Vision activities, supported decision-making agreements, emergency preparedness, and other partner activities, and data is being collected on participation and outcomes.
 - No need for clarification.
 - The key activity points to the overall objective.

Activity 2.2, Systems Transparency, Navigation, and Rural Access

- Promote system-level improvements that increase access to plain language and accessible information across agencies, including the development and dissemination of plain language policy resources, and ensure rural and underserved communities are included in system coordination efforts related to service navigation, policy development, and long-term supports and services.
 - Key activity: Develop, promote, or disseminate plain language and accessible informational resources related to disability services, supports, policies, or systems navigation.
 - Output: At least two accessible resource, communications, or outreach efforts developed or disseminated.
 - Outcome: Increased access to understandable and accessible information for individuals with I/DD, families, and stakeholders.
 - Data evaluation: Resources distribution counts, website/social media analytics, GovDelivery analytics, stakeholder feedback, accessibility review documentation.
 - Comments:
 - Examples of efforts in place of participation in plain language resources include legislative activities, Pathways Guidebook, Empowerment to Employment Handbook, DB 101, Get Ready! Toolkit, and input for the Alaska Driver's License Handbook.
 - Council could review agency information for plain language.
 - Include plain language related to voting guides.

Activity 2.3, Workforce & Capacity Systems Advocacy

- Coordinate with partners to elevate workforce and provider capacity challenges affecting the disability services workforce (direct support professionals (DSPs), personal care assistants (PCAs), etc.) within Medicaid HCBS waiver services and long-term supports and services as a systems issue rather than a single-agency problem, and support cross-system discussions that identify policy and systems improvements aligned with Alaska's Shared Vision.
 - Key activity: Participate in workforce-related discussions, coalitions, or planning efforts addressing recruitment, retention, training, and systems capacity challenges impacting disability services in Alaska.
 - Output: Participation in at least four workforce or systems capacity discussions, meetings, or collaborative efforts annually.
 - Outcome: Increased awareness and cross-sector collaboration related to workforce shortages and systems capacity challenges affecting people with I/DD.
 - Data evaluation: Meeting participation records, meeting summaries, partners' engagement tracking, and identified workforce themes or recommendations.
 - Comments:
 - Activity 2.3 is focused on I/DD service providers, DSPs, PCAs, and the like.
 - Examples of partners include AADD, partner PECs, HB 96 if signed.
 - Data evaluation is a focus of the Rural Health Transformation Program.

Activity 2.4, Legislative Advocacy Infrastructure

- Develop and disseminate policy position resources (e.g., briefs or position papers) and engage in coordinated policy discussions with legislators and partners to advance systems improvements impacting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including efforts aligned with Alaska's Shared Vision.
 - Key activity: Develop and disseminate policy position resources and participate in coordinated advocacy activities related to the Shared Vision-aligned systems change priorities.
 - Output: Development of at least two policy resources and participation in coordinated advocacy activities.
 - Outcome: Increased stakeholder awareness and policy engagement related to systems issues impacting people with I/DD.
 - Data evaluation: Number of resources produced/distributed, legislative meetings or advocacy activities participated in, partner collaboration tracking analytics, and stakeholder feedback, where available.
 - Comments:
 - Examples include position papers, Juneau meetings with lawmakers, lunch-and-learns, meetings with the federal delegation, and attendance at the Disability Policy Seminar.
 - Invite legislators to learn in person about the experiences of a person with I/DD (day in the life).
 - Develop relationships with legislators out of session.

Activity 2.5, Beneficiary Advisory Board Participation

- Participate as a Beneficiary Advisory Board member to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, contributing input and guidance to support systems coordination, policy alignment, and initiatives that impact people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
 - Key activity: Participate as a beneficiary advisory board member to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, providing input on systems coordination, policy alignment, funding priorities, and initiatives.
 - Output: Participation in Beneficiary Advisory Board meetings, Trust-related planning discussions, and/or review opportunities that impact people with I/DD.
 - Outcome: The needs and priorities of Alaskans with I/DD are represented in Trust advisory discussions, funding recommendations, and systems-change initiatives.
 - Data evaluation: Number of meetings attended, number of Trust discussions or recommendations informed by Council input, meeting notes and minutes, and summary of I/DD-related issues elevated.
 - Comments:
 - Add a specific number to the output.
 - Council staff attend Trust meetings and regularly provide input.

Representative Andi Story Update

Rep. Andi Story announced that the legislature began with a budget deficit. She reported that Alaskans are currently facing elevated prices for goods and services due to U.S. involvement abroad; however, this situation has led to higher oil revenue,

benefiting the state's budget. Consequently, significant investments have been made in deferred maintenance for schools and universities. Additionally, the session concluded with a \$1,000 Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) for residents, along with a \$200 energy relief check, amounting to a total of \$1,200. The overall expenditure for the PFD and energy relief is projected at \$817 million, to be distributed to each resident in October.

Other large funding pieces included the following:

- \$6M increase allocated for long-term and personal care services
- \$5M increase designated for in-home and community caregivers for DSPs
- Approval of additional behavioral health grants in education
- \$115M in one-time funding for general education funding, some of which could be appropriated by the school board for special education services
- \$29M allocated for energy relief for school districts
- \$6.5M increase for childcare centers to support staff retention efforts.

Rep. Story announced the sponsorship of HB 28, a teacher student loan repayment program aimed at encouraging educators, particularly in special education, to remain in Alaska. The bill has evolved into an omnibus education measure, with an additional provision introduced by the Senate Education Committee that mandates the State of Alaska cover school district energy costs annually. HB 28 is awaiting the Governor's approval.

Rep. Story expressed her disappointment regarding the Governor's veto of HB 26, the Statewide Public and Community Transit Plan. She indicated that the process will likely be reinstituted in the next session, which marks the beginning of a two-year legislative period. Additionally, Rep. Story acknowledged the Council's advocacy efforts. She also noted that the legislative budget must undergo a legal review before it is sent to the Governor for approval.

Council Priorities

Updates on the following Council priorities were tabled due to a lack of time:

- *SB 178/HB 376 – Expand Early Intervention Services (ILP Program)*
- *HB 246 – SESA Funding*
- *Waitlist Priorities (interRAI funding and HCBS Guidehouse)*
- *HB 26 – Public and Community Transit*
- *SB 8/HB 39 – Education for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*
- *HB 272 – Insurance for Prosthetics and Orthotics*

TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Upcoming Legislative Committee meetings:

- July 9, 2026 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
- August 2026, no meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Art Delaune **MOVED** to adjourn at 1:52 p.m., **SECONDED** by Demii Van Dusen. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.